

261358Z Apr 00

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-01
	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	EUR-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	AC-01	DCP-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	IRM-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/014W

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5866  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 002237

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF A/S SUSAN RICE, AF/S RENDER, BOOTH, GURNEY

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

LONDON FOR PFLAUMER

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/26/00

TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM PINR KDEM PINS ZI

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR/TSVANGIRAI MEETING: MDC URGING RESTRAINT IN FACE OF ESCALATING ELECTION VIOLENCE, BUT INCHING TOWARDS A DEFENSIVE STRATEGY

REF: HARARE 1970

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER MAKILA JAMES, REASONS 1.5 B/D.

**¶1.** (C) SUMMARY: IN THE RUN-UP TO THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, THE MDC IS CONFRONTING INCREASING POLITICAL VIOLENCE FROM ZANU-PF, WHICH HAS LEFT FIVE OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S SUPPORTERS DEAD AND HUNDREDS OF RURAL AND URBAN BACKERS INJURED. NEVERTHELESS, MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI BELIEVES THE ELECTION WILL LIKELY GO FORWARD IN JUNE. THE OPPOSITION PARTY SAYS IT IS STRONGLY URGING RESTRAINT AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND BELIEVES IT WILL STILL TAKE A MAJORITY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SEATS. THE MDC, HOWEVER, IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM ITS MEMBERSHIP TO TAKE A MORE DEFENSIVE POSTURE AND HAS RECENTLY HINTED THAT IT IS MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION. A CONFLICT BETWEEN LONDON'S LABOR AND CONSERVATIVE PARTIES IS BLOCKING A COHERENT RESPONSE TO ZIMBABWE'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS OR SUPPORT FOR THE MDC, ACCORDING TO TSVANGIRAI. THE MDC PRESIDENT CRITICIZED THE U.S. FOR

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WHAT HE PERCEIVED TO BE OUR EMPHASIS ON ENGAGING MUGABE ON THE DROC CRISIS AT THE EXPENSE OF PRESSING HIM ON THE COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS. THE MDC SEES MUGABE AS ALMOST OBSOLETE AND IS FOCUSED ON WORKING OUT AN AMNESTY DEAL FOR KEY MILITARY FIGURES TO FORESTALL MORE VIOLENCE. SOUTH AFRICA IS UNABLE TO INFLUENCE MUGABE

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BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT MBEKI'S JUNIOR POSITION, ALTHOUGH THE FAILURE TO DO SO IS INVITING ECONOMIC DISASTER FOR PRETORIA, THE MDC LEADER ASSERTED. THE MDC SEEKS CONTINUED U.S. INSISTENCE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE ESCALATING

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**¶2.** (C) MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE PRESIDENT (MDC), MORGAN TSVANGIRAI, ACCOMPANIED BY LOCAL BUSINESSMAN AND MDC OFFICIAL CLIVE PUZEY, CALLED ON AMBASSADOR McDONALD ON APRIL 25 TO DISCUSS THE ESCALATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE. IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS SUCH VIOLENCE HAS GONE FROM PHYSICAL ATTACKS AND GENERAL INTIMIDATION OF VOTERS, TO MURDERS OF BLACK FARM WORKERS, WHITE COMMERCIAL FARMERS, AND OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS. A TOTAL OF FIVE MDC SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE TO DATE, MOST RECENTLY THREE BACKERS WERE BEATEN TO DEATH IN HARARE, SHAMVA, AND ANOTHER PERI-URBAN AREA, THE MDC LEADER INFORMED. TSVANGIRAI BELIEVES THE FARM VIOLENCE HAS BEEN ORCHESTRATED TO

SHIFT THE FOCUS FROM ZANU-PF'S LIKELY ELECTORAL DEFEAT  
TO THE EMOTIONAL LAND REFORM ISSUE.

13. (C) OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS TSVANGIRAI PREDICTS THE  
POLITICAL VIOLENCE WILL INCREASE. HE STATED THAT THE  
FEARED "FIFTH BRIGADE" ARMY MEMBERS, WHO WERE  
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "GUKURUHUNDI" MASSACRES IN  
MATABELELAND AND THE MIDLANDS IN THE EARLY 1980'S, HAVE  
AGAIN BEEN UNLEASHED ON THE CIVILIANS IN THOSE PARTS OF  
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THE COUNTRY, AND POSSIBLY ELSEWHERE. PUZEY ENVISIONS A  
RETURN TO THE DAYS WHEN THE COUNTRY LIVED IN TERROR  
BECAUSE OF THE DEGREE AND SEVERITY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE  
THAT RESULTED IN "TRAINLOADS" OF VICTIMS BEING  
TRANSPORTED FOR BURIALS BY THEIR FAMILIES. THE VIOLENCE  
THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS ORGANIZING AND/OR CONDONING IS  
DESIGNED TO CREATE TERROR, ERODE MDC SUPPORT AND ENSURE  
THE RULING PARTY OF AN ELECTORAL VICTORY IN ITS  
HISTORICALLY LOYAL RURAL AREAS WHOSE SUPPORT IS NOW IN  
DOUBT. IN SEPARATE MEETINGS, MDC SUPPORTERS HAVE  
DOWNPLAYED THE LIKELIHOOD OF MUGABE DECLARING A "STATE  
OF EMERGENCY," AS THE RULING PARTY'S STRATEGY SEEMS MORE  
FOCUSED ON GUARANTEEING AN ELECTORAL VICTORY TO